**28th Session of the UPR Working Group**

**Review of Ukraine**

**Statement by Austria**

Austria welcomes H.E. ... and the delegation of Ukraine to the UPR and thanks for the submission of the national report.

We particularly welcome the report’s concise follow-up on recommendations brought forward by Austria during Ukraine’s last review in 2012, and encourage Ukraine to continue in its efforts e.g. in the justice sector reform, towards the establishment of a good juvenile justice system and for creating an enabling environment for journalists and media professionals. Furthermore we would ask for additional information on the planned timeframe for the adoption by the Verkhovna Rada of the draft Law on Amending Certain Legislative Acts Concerning the Right for Pension by Specific Categories of Citizens and the entry into force of this draft law.

Austria is concerned about recurring reports about cases of torture and ill-treatment and other human rights violations by law enforcement officials. We hope that the establishment of an independent SBI will improve the situation. We remain also concerned about the persistent practice of ill treatment and torture by the parties of the on-going conflict in the eastern part of the Ukraine. The difficult situation of internally displaced persons and the number of victims of human trafficking in Ukraine, which seems to be the highest in Europe, are also worrying.

With regard to the new legislation on Ukrainian educational reform, Austria welcomes the request by Ukraine of an expert opinion by the Venice Commission of the Council of Europe and hopes that Ukraine will closely cooperate with the Council of Europe as well as the OSCE High Commissioner on Minority Issues in order to address concerns regarding rights of persons belonging to minorities.

Austria would therefore like to offer the following recommendations:

* to ensure that the Justice Sector Reform Strategy for 2015-2020 is further implemented to improve access to justice, strengthen independence, and eliminate corruption;
* to urgently ratify and implement the Istanbul Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence;
* to implement the recommendations of the latest report by the United Nations Human Rights Monitoring Mission in Ukraine of September 2017 notably to develop a national mechanism to make available to civilian victims of the conflict adequate, effective, prompt and appropriate remedies, including reparation;
* to swiftly ratify the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court (ICC).

I thank you.